

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTIVE NO. 4/5

PRIORITY NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE OBJECTIVES

(18 October 1955; /

1. Pursuant to National Security Council Intelligence Directive No. 4, paragraph 2, the following list of priority national intelligence objectives is established as a guide for the coordination of intelligence collection and production in response to requirements relating to the formulation and execution of national security policy.

2. By definition, all items in this listing are deemed to be critical national intelligence factors requiring priority attention and effort. Distinction is made, however, between three levels of priority within the general priority category. Order of listing within these three groups is a matter of convenience in presentation and has no significance with respect to the relative priority of specific items within the group.

3. In order to afford a stable basis for intelligence planning, this directive is designed to remain valid over an extended period. It will be reviewed annually, or on the request of any member of the IAC. It is recognized that urgent interim requirements may arise requiring ad hoc treatment, and that the criteria on which the following priorities are established shall remain under continuing review. These criteria were issued in IAC-D-50/7, 16 August 1955, and define categories of priority as follows:

a. First Priority Intelligence Objectives are those which will permit the US: (1) to anticipate and counter those policies or actions of foreign states which would occasion gravest consequences to the US; and (2) to stimulate policies or actions of foreign states (or actions within them) which could occasion greatest benefit to the US.

b. Second Priority Intelligence Objectives are those which will permit the US: (1) to anticipate and counter those policies or actions of foreign states which would have serious consequences for the US; and (2) to stimulate policies or actions of foreign states (or actions within them) which could occasion great benefit to the US.

c. Third Priority Intelligence Objectives are those which will permit the US: (1) to anticipate and counter those policies or actions of foreign states which would have harmful consequences to the US; and (2) to stimulate policies or actions of foreign states (or actions within them) which could occasion substantial benefits to the US.

4. DCID 4/4 is hereby rescinded.¹

¹ DCID 4/4, "Priority List of Critical National Intelligence Objectives," was issued 14 December 1954.